

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

February 4, 2003

7:00 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Wihby.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Gatsas, Guinta, Osborne, Pinard, O'Neil,
Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, and Forest

Absent: Aldermen Sysyn, Thibault

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to two minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Baines requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

Jeff Kassel, 22 Appleton Road, Manchester stated:

I come here as I have come before to complain about the expenditure for the baseball stadium that has been proposed for \$25 million. I want to put that in the context of what is really happening economically throughout the country and really throughout the world. It is almost an economic calamity that is going on and it is affecting all of the states in the United States, including New Hampshire. I want to say that I don't think this is the time to borrow \$25 million to finance a stadium when it is not clear whether a team is going to remain there for the time that that financing takes place. We have other priorities in this City. I was just driving up South Willow Street today and there were potholes all over that street as there are all over my street and as there are all over many, many streets throughout the City. There is a finite amount of dollars to be spent and if you spend it on civic centers or you spend it on stadiums it is not going to be available to eliminate trailers that are being used for schoolrooms. It is not going to be available to fix City streets. A priority of this Aldermanic

Board and the Mayor is to build athletic complexes and entertainment complexes rather than to repair the infrastructure of this City. Now I realize there is another bonding proposal on the table for approximately \$60 or \$70 million to fix the schools but that is an additional debt burden that is going to fall on this City and all over the country they are cutting back and they are cutting back with good reason. This is not the time to borrow money for frivolous entertainment projects. Thank you.

Billy Dodd, 181 Mammoth Road, Manchester stated:

Tonight's topics, ONL, ticket surcharge and news bites. Does anybody know what ONL spells? There is one letter left off, the Y for Right Hand Only Turn. You cannot read the last letter because the snowbanks are halfway out in the road. A prime example is Goffs Falls and Auto Center Road. I know there has been one accident there because I saw it. The City did a heck of a job out there plowing the streets while the storm was going on but you have to carry the ball a little bit further and get out there and clean up the tight spots. There was an interesting article in today's paper about a snowplow out doing the sidewalks and the Highway Director states that he used to have some extra money to go into a snow budget if he ran short from the paving projects but you guys cut that money out so now he might run out of money and have to come back and ask for more money. How about a new twist, Mr. Thomas? How about requesting more money in your snow budget and then when you don't use it, use that money to pave some extra roads? Last time I was here I requested my Alderman to gather up some information for me on the prospects of a ticket surcharge. He provided me with a document that came in to you guys about a year ago, last March. This even raises more questions. Who the heck is Ropes & Gray out of Boston? Who do they represent? SMG? Us? Did they market the bonds? From reading this we can charge a ticket surcharge to pay back the private bank loan that you signed for, your Honor. There was a request in the paper this past Sunday for proposals to be a construction manager for the construction of the additions to the schools. Find out where that money is coming from? Is that going to come out of the bond money or is that something the City is going to foot the bill for by itself? News bites. There is a new show coming to MCTV. News Bites. The first guest that I am going to have on is going to be my Alderman, Mr. Shea. After that, Mr. Baines you can come on and we can gang up on the crowd that wants to chew up the City Charter because it doesn't need that much of a change.

Joe Kelly Levasseur, 866 Elm Street, Manchester stated:

I think the Charter Commission is doing an outstanding job and I agree with what they are doing. I was upset to see that the Mayor would come out and promise that he would go against the Charter just because they want to change the partisan elections from non-partisan to partisan. What I am here to talk about mostly are broken promises on the part of the Mayor. When Mayor Baines was running for Mayor three or three and a half years ago, he made a big hoop de do about the fact that children at Central, students at Central, were wearing coats, hats, gloves and mittens when they were taking mid-terms in January. Well, while Bob Baines is down in Washington getting hundreds and hundreds of business cards

and rubbing elbows with the rich and famous and the City is in disarray we find out those same students who were freshman when you became Mayor and are now seniors as you are entering into your fourth year are still taking mid-terms in coats, gloves, hats and mittens. It would be nice if you would issue an apology saying that Ray Wieczorek wasn't doing his job when four years later one of your biggest promises was that those children wouldn't have to do that and thank goodness the *Union Leader* put in there that they are still doing so. Also another broken promise is that teachers wouldn't have to pay for supplies. The fact that Leslee Stewart came out in the paper two weeks ago and said we are putting a moratorium on teachers and they can't use supplies, I am hearing over and over again that the teachers are still having to pay for crayons and construction paper. Two broken promises and this open door policy about government and how you said you were opening the doors to government, well Channel 16 and Channel 22 are now the dominion of the School Board and the Mayor. The Mayor was on 24 times in one weekend preaching for his baseball stadium. The people who don't have power but do have a chance to talk and keep this City honest and represented are shoved over to Channel 96. That is not open government. Also, Mr. Mayor, the fact that there are only four people here to speak and you only allow us two minutes and when we are done talking at 7:15 PM there will be 15 minutes of you standing around...I think you should allow people to speak a little bit longer than two minutes. I don't think you really like or enjoy hearing the truth, Mayor.

Gail Nessel Colglazier, 129 Amherst Street, Manchester stated:

I have no complaints to register tonight but I would like to, on behalf of the Manchester Historic Association, encourage the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to endorse the resolution supporting LCHIP, the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program. In just two short years LCHIP has been extraordinarily successful and cost effective in helping communities protect land and historic buildings. Because it is a matching grant program, every state dollar that is invested is matched by non-state money. In fact, to day for every \$1 that the program has given, \$4.42 has come from other sources. Manchester has benefited from two LCHIP grants and there are several more on the waiting list. The City received money in 2001 - \$75,000 for purchase and conservation of land on Hackett Hill and last year \$70,000 went towards the purchase and renovation of the Athens Building, which is just a block or so away from here on Hanover Street. Obviously the revitalization of this downtown business block is an important part of our downtown improvement efforts but funding for LCHIP is about to run out. The last grants will be awarded later this month and if additional funding is not included in the new state budget the program will end. Supporters of the project have been working with the governor and the new administration in hopes of continuing the program. As with any program, the more people who speak out in support of it the better the chance it has to be funded. That is why I am here and I am encouraging you to support the resolution. It costs nothing and the benefits are great. Please send the government a message that the City of Manchester supports the LCHIP program. Thank you.

Pat Meyer, 1330 Union Street, Manchester stated:

I am a trustee of the Historic Association and I am also Chair of the NH Preservation Alliance. I, like Gail, am here to urge you to support the LCHIP resolution. Gail has already given you the figures of what LCHIP has done for Manchester and I am hoping that some of the five grants that will be announced – some of the five Manchester proposals that are in competition for the grants to be announced next week will also be successful so there will be even additional funding. LCHIP has been working in over 50 towns and I passed out brochures about the program and on the back there is a list of all of the communities that have received LCHIP money so far. It provides funding only unfortunately for about 1/3 of the community proposals that have been brought forward but even that has made a significant impact in funding projects in about 50 communities and preserving already about 35 community structures. It has really made a tremendous impact and will continue to do so if it receives renewed funding and I urge you to support it.

Maureen Molly Lee Sherman, 444 Chestnut Street, Manchester stated:

Manchester should not have a baseball team when they are still paying off for the civic arena. Mayor Robert Baines and Welfare Commissioner Paul Martineau should not get raises. They don't need it. Aldermen and School Board members should not have their health and dental insurance taken away. They need it.

Don Welch, Dix Street, Manchester stated:

I wasn't going to say anything tonight but I had the privilege of being at last week's School Board meeting and I have been tracking this school redevelopment package. One thing...I am not from the East Side over by the Central area but I do know a little bit about construction. I can't believe that in this plan that they want to build an underground parking garage under the footprint of Central High School. I don't get it. What I do get is what happens with a construction company when they have multi-million dollar contracts and very little oversight. Underground parking garages become big ways of generating profits for the construction company. I wish that all of you would look, if this package does make it to your hands, at it very closely to make sure that whatever package comes forward that we get this work done in a cost effective fashion. Thank you.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business was presented and on motion of Alderman Lopez, duly seconded by Alderman Forest, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk